

Devices can help save the environment

By Lynda Chervil

Just as intended, the 44th annual celebration of Earth Day is surrounded by talk of our environment, our impact on it and what we can do to better live in harmony with it.

We're seeing more and more people who realize that, if each of us does what we can every day, collectively, we can have a tremendous impact.

All the people carrying reusable grocery sacks, people who've quit the plastic water bottle habit, folks heating their pools or houses with solar panels – that's what we should be celebrating this Earth Day.

This year's March Gallup Environment poll found that 42 percent of Americans believe the outlook for the environment has improved, up from only 26 percent in 2008.

Here are four devices that would make a nice gift for Mother Earth on her day:

- HybridLight Solar Flashlight: These flashlights never need batteries, can be charged from any light source, and they always work. The 120 lumens model will burn for eight hours on one charge. HybridLight's flashlights are so reliable, the Boy Scouts' Utah National Parks Council endorse them – and they come with a lifetime guarantee. For every 10 hours of use, 100 HybridLight flashlights avert 60 pounds of toxic battery landfill waste. An added very cool note – HybridLights has a mission to light up corners of the world with little or no electricity. Recently, the company supplied everyone in a Kenyan village with their own flashlight. Cost: Prices start at less than \$20.

- **Bedol Water Alarm Clock:** Imagine a water-powered alarm clock that's loud enough to scare you out of bed. Bedol's water clocks run strictly on tap water – no batteries, no nothing else. The energy comes from a natural reaction between the water and two metal plates. The smallest clocks in the line run for six to 12 weeks before the display begins to fade, indicating that the water needs to be changed. Occasionally, you also need to clean the metal plates with vinegar. Just in time for Earth Day, Bedol is launch it's 12-by-15-inch wall-mount water clock. Cost: Prices start at \$19.

- **iGo Green Power Smart Wall:** We've all heard of the "vampires" in our homes that suck up power whether we're using them or not – everything from coffee pots to laptops. Stem the bleeding with this surge protector that cuts the suck by up to 85 percent. The unit, which plugs into the wall, has four outlets, two of which are always on. The other two automatically power down when the attached appliance is not in use. Cost: Prices start at about \$12.

- **Pama Eco Navigator Satellite Navigation system:** This GPS system also saves gasoline by providing you with the most energy-efficient routes to your destinations, and feedback on your car's performance, so you can adjust your driving habits to improve your gas mileage. It also saves all your routes, so you can assess their fuel efficiency. Cost: Watch for pricing and availability on Amazon.

Most of these items are not only budget priced, they save you money in batteries, electricity and fuel. Not only are you doing something great for the planet when you use green technology, you're taking a load off your wallet.

Lynda Chervil is the author of "Fool's Return," a new novel that incorporates valuable life lessons in a page-turning tale that touches on technology, the green movement, and other aspects of contemporary society.